

Message Text

SECRET

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ACTION SS-25

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S E C R E T SECTION 01 OF 02 GENEVA 02426

EXDIS

USSALT TWO

E.O. 11652: XGDS-1
TAGS: PARM
SUBJECT: AMBASSADOR EARLE'S STATEMENT OF FEBRUARY 16,
1978 (SALT TWO-1621)

1. THE FOLLOWING IS STATEMENT DELIVERED BY AMBASSADOR
EARLE AT SALT TWO MEETING OF FEBRUARY 16, 1978:

- STATEMENT BY AMBASSADOR EARLE
- FEBRUARY 16, 1978
- I

MR. MINISTER:

TODAY I WILL RETURN TO THE SUBJECT OF THE LIMITATIONS
TO BE APPLIED IN THE PROTOCOL TO NEW TYPES OF ICBMS. THIS
IS ONE OF THE MOST IMPORTANT ISSUES WHICH STAND BETWEEN
US AND THE SUCCESSFUL CONCLUSION OF THESE NEGOTIATIONS.
ITS IMPORTANCE IS CLEAR -- IT GOES TO THE HEART OF THE
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QUESTION OF WHETHER OUR TWO COUNTRIES WILL BE ABLE TO
ESTABLISH EFFECTIVE QUALITATIVE LIMITATIONS ON THOSE ARM-
AMENTS WITH THE GREATEST POTENTIAL FOR UNDERMINING
STRATEGIC STABILITY.

- II

THE UNITED STATES PROPOSAL FOR ARTICLE II OF THE PROTOCOL WOULD PLACE EFFECTIVE LIMITATIONS UPON THE CAPABILITIES OF THE ICBMS OF BOTH SIDES. IT WOULD DO THIS BY PROHIBITING THE FLIGHT-TESTING AND DEPLOYMENT OF ALL TYPES OF ICBMS NOT FLIGHT-TESTED AS OF THE DATE OF SIGNATURE OF THE TREATY AND BY PROHIBITING IMPROVEMENTS IN THE CAPABILITIES OF EXISTING ICBMS. IT IS CLEAR THAT EITHER HALF OF THIS SET OF CONSTRAINTS WOULD HAVE LITTLE EFFECT WITHOUT THE OTHER. IT ALSO SEEMS CLEAR THAT, IN THE ABSENCE OF SUCH CONSTRAINTS, THE CAPABILITIES OF THE ICBMS OF BOTH SIDES WOULD MOVE TOWARD EVEN MORE FORMIDABLE LEVELS. IT IS DIFFICULT TO IMAGINE WHAT CONSTRUCTIVE PURPOSE WOULD BE SERVED BY ALLOWING THIS TO OCCUR. THE INTRODUCTION OF NEW AND IMPROVED ICBMS DURING THE PROTOCOL PERIOD COULD ONLY CREATE NEW OBSTACLES AND PERHAPS PRECLUDE CERTAIN FURTHER ARMS CONTROL OPPORTUNITIES WHICH WOULD BE BENEFICIAL TO BOTH SIDES. THE HISTORY OF THESE NEGOTIATIONS PROVIDES AMPLE EVIDENCE THAT CURRENT OPPORTUNITIES LOST MAY WELL NOT RECUR IN THE FUTURE.

THE SOVIET SIDE HAS CORRECTLY NOTED THAT THE UNITED STATES PROPOSAL WOULD APPLY STRICTER CONSTRAINTS TO ICBMS THAN TO THE OTHER MAJOR CATEGORIES OF STRATEGIC OFFENSIVE ARMS. THE SIDES HAVE DISCUSSED THIS POINT IN THE PAST, AND THE UNITED STATES REMAINS CONVINCED THAT PROVISIONS IMPLEMENTING SUCH AN APPROACH ARE AN ESSENTIAL PART OF
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THIS AGREEMENT. THE CHARACTERISTICS OF ICBMS, INCLUDING THEIR DESTRUCTIVE POWER, ACCURACY AND SHORT TIME OF FLIGHT, CREATE A GREATER THREAT TO STABILITY THAN DO OTHER STRATEGIC FORCES. AT THE SAME TIME, FIXED ICBM LAUNCHERS HAVE A LOWER PROBABILITY OF SURVIVING AN ATTACK THAN DO THE SUBMARINE OR HEAVY BOMBER FORCES. IT SHOULD THEREFORE BE A HIGH PRIORITY IN THESE NEGOTIATIONS TO ARREST FURTHER SIGNIFICANT INCREASES IN THE CAPABILITIES OF ICBMS, WHICH INCREASES WOULD UNDERMINE THE EXISTING STRATEGIC BALANCE.

- III

THE SOVIET APPROACH TO THIS PROBLEM SEEMS TO US INCONSISTENT WITH THE GOAL OF ENHANCING STRATEGIC STABILITY. IT WOULD BAN THE FLIGHT-TESTING AND DEPLOYMENT OF NEW TYPES OF ICBMS FOR THE PERIOD OF THE PROTOCOL, BUT AT THE SAME TIME WOULD PROVIDE FOR AN EXCEPTION FOR EACH SIDE FOR ONE NEW TYPE OF ICBM WITH A SINGLE REENTRY VEHICLE. THE SOVIET APPROACH WOULD APPARENTLY ALLOW THESE NEW ICBMS TO HAVE SUBSTANTIALLY LARGER THROW-WEIGHTS AND LAUNCH-WEIGHTS AS WELL AS SIGNIFICANTLY HIGHER ACCURACIES THAN THOSE OF THE SINGLE-RV ICBMS THEY WOULD REPLACE.

WHILE THE SOVIET SIDE HAS SOUGHT TO MINIMIZE THE SIGNIFICANCE OF THIS EXCEPTION, IT MUST BE RECOGNIZED THAT SUCH AN EXCEPTION WOULD LEAD TO THE REPLACEMENT OF HUNDREDS OF SOVIET ICBMS WITH NEW ICBMS WITH GREATER CAPABILITIES. THIS COULD PLACE THE UNITED STATES IN A POSITION WHERE IT WOULD BE COMPELLED TO RESPOND IN A SIMILAR FASHION.

IN ADDITION, IF A NEW SINGLE-RV ICBM COULD BE

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EXDIS USSALTTWO

DEVELOPED AND FLIGHT-TESTED, THE OPPORTUNITY WOULD BE PROVIDED FOR THE DEVELOPMENT OF TECHNOLOGICAL IMPROVEMENTS WHICH COULD LATER PROVIDE THE BASIS FOR POTENTIALLY DESTABILIZING CHANGES IN THE CAPABILITIES OF MIRVED ICBMS. IT WOULD BE POSSIBLE TO WORK OUT THE DESIGN OF THE PROPOSED NEW ICBM IN A MANNER WHICH WOULD FACILITATE THE TRANSFER OF SUCH QUALITATIVE IMPROVEMENTS TO OTHER MISSILES IN THE FUTURE.

THE SOVIET APPROACH WOULD ALSO SEEM TO PERMIT VIRTUALLY UNLIMITED MODIFICATIONS AND IMPROVEMENTS TO EXISTING ICBM SYSTEMS, BOTH MIRVED AND UNMIRVED. FOR EXAMPLE, UNDER THE SOVIET APPROACH, EXISTING ICBMS COULD BE GIVEN IMPROVED PROPULSION AND GUIDANCE SYSTEMS, AS WELL AS IMPROVED REENTRY VEHICLES, PENETRATION AIDS AND DEVICES FOR TARGETING, RELEASING OR DISPENSING THEM, AND NEW COMBINATIONS THEREOF. ALL OF THESE POTENTIAL IMPROVEMENTS WOULD BE BANNED UNDER THE UNITED STATES PROPOSAL.

IN THE VIEW OF THE UNITED STATES, THE COMBINATION OF PROVISIONS IN THE SOVIET PROPOSAL WOULD DO LITTLE TO

ARREST THE MOMENTUM OF ICBM PROGRAMS. UNDER SUCH A
PERMISSIVE REGIME, IT WOULD BE DIFFICULT INDEED TO SHOW
HOW THE TWO SIDES HAD DEALT IN A CONSTRUCTIVE WAY WITH
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THIS PROBLEM.

THE SOVIET SIDE HAS CLAIMED TO SEE A CONTRADICTION
BETWEEN THE UNITED STATES PROPOSAL ON NEW ICBMS AND
ARTICLE X OF THE TREATY. THIS ARTICLE PROVIDES THAT,
"SUBJECT TO THE PROVISIONS OF THIS TREATY, MODERNIZATION
AND REPLACEMENT OF STRATEGIC OFFENSIVE ARMS MAY BE
CARRIED OUT." IT IS QUITE CORRECT THAT THE UNITED STATES
PROPOSAL WOULD LIMIT THE MODERNIZATION AND REPLACEMENT OF
ICBMS. TO A MORE LIMITED EXTENT, THE SOVIET PROPOSAL
WOULD ALSO HAVE THIS EFFECT. THE PROPOSAL WE ARE DIS-
CUSSING WOULD BE ONE OF THE PROVISIONS OF THE NEW
AGREEMENT TO WHICH MODERNIZATION AND REPLACEMENT WOULD BE
SUBJECT BY THE TERMS OF ARTICLE X ITSELF. THE SIDES HAVE
ALREADY AGREED TO A NUMBER OF PROVISIONS WHICH IMPINGE ON
THE RIGHT TO MODERNIZATION AND REPLACEMENT, AS IS
EVIDENCED, FOR EXAMPLE, BY ARTICLE IV. THUS, IT IS
INCORRECT TO ARGUE THAT CONSTRAINTS ON MODERNIZATION AND
REPLACEMENT ARE INCONSISTENT WITH ARTICLE X.

- IV

MR. MINISTER, THE GOAL OF THE UNITED STATES PROPOSAL
FOR ARTICLE II OF THE PROTOCOL IS TO HALT THE MOMENTUM
TOWARD IMPROVED ICBMS FOR A LIMITED TIME TO ENABLE THE
SIDES TO WORK OUT A MUTUALLY ADVANTAGEOUS SOLUTION FOR THE
LONGER TERM IN THE CONTEXT OF COMPREHENSIVE LIMITATIONS AND
REDUCTIONS OF STRATEGIC ARMS. WE HOPE THAT THE SOVIET
SIDE SHARES THIS GOAL AND WILL JOIN IN AN EFFORT TO ACHIEVE
IT. EARLE

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